

**THE POCAHONTAS TIMES**

Entered at the Postoffice at Marlinton, W. Va., as second class matter

CALVIN W. PRICE, Editor.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1929

This is a study of the Watauga or Watauga settlements on the headwaters of the Tennessee River and their connection with the War Path of Seneca Trail. A great many years ago in fact before the Revolution, some of our neighbors wandered off south and set up a government of their own, and came within an ace of getting into the United States under the name of the State of Franklin.

It has been taken for granted that the Watauga pioneers followed the Blue Ridge down the map, but the more I study the case the more convinced I become that they followed the War Path as laid down in the treaty of Lancaster in 1744, that is they topped the Allegheny Mountain at Rider's Gap and hit the main trail at Marlinton, and followed down the edge of the escarpment marking the eastern boundary of the plateau or highlands forming West Virginia, passing by Abbe Valley on the headwaters of the Blue Stone River, and continuing south to a place on the War Path where Gen. John Sevier built his magnificent log house on the Nolichucky River. At one place they passed at the point where in after years the traffic turned to the right to the Cumberland Gap on the Wilderness trail, for the time was not ripe for the invasion of the Kentucky lands.

Travel in the days of the Indian domination of America was a simple matter if the explorer knew the turns that he had to make, for the whole country was a network of well traveled paths. The Indians were great travelers. They were firmly attached to their homesteads but it was the custom to wander hundreds of miles in every direction and live on the land. They were as migratory as the rich people of today who have to go south in the winter and who wander all over the world.

In the mountains these paths were plainly laid out and were well located and took advantage of the contours of the country, but as a rule they were but eighteen inches or some such matter broad for the rule was to walk in Indian file and through they might be deeply cut into the soil, they were narrow. There was one exception in this part of the country, and that was the War Path. It was so extensively traveled that it was broader.

The parts of it that are still to be seen in Pocahontas county have the appearance of abandoned county roads, but it is difficult to judge by that for the paths were used by the white people for many years, and the pack horses passed over them by the thousands.

I have known a section of this old war road myself for fifty years, and it is still plainly marked, and used occasionally for a path. In that time I have never known it to be used for a horse and it is not wide enough for a vehicle. It leaves the State Highway, Road 24, in the corporate limits of the town of Marlinton and takes to the point of the Jericho Hill at Price Run and climbs along the end of the mountain to the Flats overlooking the town from the west. It owes its present condition to the fact that it was a near cut from the barn on the old Price place to the fields on the Flats and the choice is still there whether the farmer will go the short way and climb or cut around on the easy grades of the county road known as the Back Road. Enough people have passed over it from time to time to keep it well marked and it is a section of the old Indian improvement that has been preserved.

The travel south in pioneer days followed the trough-like valley running south-west. Staunton, in the Valley of Virginia, was the objective and from there the Blue Ridge could be followed to land the pioneer about Asheville, North Carolina, or he could swing to the west and take the best trail of all of them on the west side of the Allegheny Mountain.

It was this Indian engineering that opened the way to that independent state centered around John Sevier and James Robertson, I am inclined to claim it as local matter.

It is an interesting study to mark the geographical influence upon the movements of new countries. For instance up until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, the people of the colonies were hemmed in between the sea and the great, blue wall known in this part of the country as the Blue Ridge. The revolt came largely from the backwoodsmen who had had the courage and fortitude to break through that blue wall. The great valley had been settled for more than a generation, and a certain number had gone west that against the express commands of the King, and they lived largely in West Virginia, with a handful of people in Kentucky.

The Watauga settlements were in Tennessee where there was a kind of a no man's land occasioned by a broadening of the country between the Blue Ridge and the escarpment, which afforded room for the great Smoky Mountains and the numerous valleys on the waters of the Holston, the Powell, the Clinch, the Nolichucky, and many other rivers and streams.

Strictly speaking there are few if any mountains in the Mountain State of West Virginia. It is a peninsula, or what remains of a towering tableland after it has been worn and washed down most of its miles by the wind and rain. All the same to the casual observer it is the most broken part of the earth's surface, no matter how it is figured out by the technical.

What we do observe however is that when we drive east that we do come to the jumping off place on the Allegheny Mountain without perceptible climbing, and then descend abruptly. This escarpment can be followed from the Catskills to a point near Georgia, the most of the way

being called Allegheny Mountain. John Sevier was born in Rockingham county. His father was Valentine Sevier and owned a lot of land on Smith Creek, and he lived in or near a village on the Valley Pike called Tenth Legion. This is in the neighborhood of the Endless Caverns, so extensively advertised. The elder Sevier was a tavern keeper. He was a French Huguenot. His wife was Joanna Goad. His son Valentine was in the battle at The Point and with James Robertson prevented the army from being rushed by a surprise attack.

The elder Sevier was in Rockingham then Augusta County, as early as 1746. By 1764, about the time that John Sevier went to the woods, the settlements in the Valley of Virginia were old and well established from the James River clear to the Potomac River. It was a rich country and filled up fast. Rockingham county is now one of the richest farming counties in the United States. Not long ago it was estimated that its population was seventy per cent Pennsylvania Dutch. It played a great part in the Revolutionary War. At that time my ancestor John Poage was living there and he was the pastor of Cook's Creek Presbyterian Church to be arranged for being a Tory. Pastor Miller was convicted. Afterwards my father was pastor of that same church and he got in bad with the church bosses because he was for a union of the northern and southern churches and was finally banished to the Western Waters.

There were some gruesome legends in that old country. In the early days a man by the name of Spruce was convicted by the courts and was hanged. The body was buried under the

gallows. Some medical students at Staunton decided to steal the body. They came at night and dug it up and hid it in the woods. The Harrisburg boys heard about it and found the body and moved it to the left of an old log tan house. The Presbyterians used the old building as a church and they held prayer meeting in the place that night. The next night the boys came back and skinned the body and tanned the hide.

The James Robertson who was one of the founders of the Watauga settlements came from Augusta County also and I am still trying to identify him as the James Robertson who lived at Covington, Virginia, on Jackson River, formerly Fort Young. I think it must be the same man.

Another man who went down to that country about the same time was William Poage. He was a son of Robert Poage and a brother of John Poage. Robert Poage is the man who went into court and proved that he imported himself, his wife, and nine children at his own expense. This was to enable him to take up land at a nominal rate under a colonization law, perhaps 50 acres for each free person he settled on the land. Those who were imported by others were not free and had to work out their bondage, and their bounty in land went to the one who paid their traveling expenses. These indentured servants or redemptioners could be sold.

This William Poage joined the companies that invaded Kentucky just before the Revolutionary War and went into Kentucky with Daniel Boone in 1775, and the next year moved to Harrod's Fort. Here he was the expert workman who made the wooden dishes.

This William Poage married Ann Kennedy. He was shot and killed September 1, 1778, by the Indians. He left children. Robert Poage, his eldest son, was twelve years old at the time. He was afterwards Gen. Robert Poage, of Mason County, Kentucky. Mrs. Poage, his widow, was married four times. Two of her husbands were killed by Indians. Her third husband, Joseph Lindsay was killed at the battle of Blue Licks in 1782.

This William Poage is often confused with Captain William Poage, of the Little Levels, Pocahontas county, his nephew, who was a son of John Poage. Captain William Poage married Margaret Davies and lived more than fifty years after the close of the Revolution.

It should be remembered that the Watauga that we are writing about is not the present Watauga County of North Carolina, but a place near Elizabethon, Carter County, Tennessee.

The Virginians who went there travelled on the general theory that they could never reach the bounds of Virginia, and when they picked out their respective springs and settled down to live in the forest, they did not know for some years that they had crossed the line.

Years before Virginia and North Carolina had agreed upon a line to run due west along the parallel 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude. In 1728, the commissioners had gone on the line in the winter time and run the line and marked it plainly through the Dismal Swamp. The hot weather coming on, they adjourned the work until fall on account of the activity of the rattlesnakes. That fall they finished the line to the mountains and considering that they were as far west as anyone was ever to go had disbanded.

The settlements on the headwaters of the Tennessee thrived and by the year 1771, there were thirteen communities. They had set up churches

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and schools. It is still a great stronghold for the Presbyterians, dating from the time that Sevier and Robertson brought the preachers there. But it was also a refuge for the ungodly. The settlers were cut off from communication with Virginia. They considered that they lived in Augusta county, and that their court-house was at Staunton, weeks travel to the north. Some of the old laws became outrageous. The colonists had to fight and trade and compromise with the Cherokee. The burden fell on the leading men of the new territory. Sevier was a great Indian fighter and he got the nickname, "Nolichucky Jack". Robertson was the great pacifier and to the day of his death he was the arbitrator that the Indian nations looked to for justice.

Things came to the head in 1771. North Carolina claimed the territory but paid no attention to it. It had two great divisions at that time, the Tidewater country and what corresponds to the Piedmont region of Virginia. The uplands labored under a disadvantage in regard to the burdens imposed upon them by a system of government framed in London, such as was causing so much opposition in Virginia. The main grievance was on account of the appointments of county colonel and sheriff, and the severity in the manner of the collection of taxes.

Tryon was the governor. The counties centering around Hillsboro, in Orange county, had many men who were ready to resist the execution of law. An association called, the Regulators, was formed, and war broke out which culminated in a battle on the banks of the Alamance River.

The army under Governor Tryon numbered about a thousand men, and was made up of the regular militia of the colony. The Regulators were never numbered. They were in camp about five miles from the Alamance but they were independent companies under captains, and there was not much order or discipline. It is estimated that there were about two thousand Regulators. Up to the time that the firing began it seems doubtful whether the Regulators considered themselves an army. They were present as they had been at so many meetings to argue the question. This was May 16, 1771.

The governor caused a proclamation to be read giving the Regulators a certain hour in which to disperse and go to their homes or to take the consequences. Rev. Dr. Caldwell tried to avert the battle by riding from one army to the other, but he could not get the Regulators to hear him. They were all over the place, wrestling and playing and paid no attention to the approach of the hour set as the limit.

On the hour the army under the governor fired and a battle of two hours ensued. In the end the Regulators scattered. The loyalist had nine killed and 61 wounded. The Regulators had nine killed but no one ever knew how many were wounded for they went into hiding. The Regulators lost fifteen men as prisoners. Tryon hung one of them, James Few, a orator, who had made too many speeches agin the government. Six more were tried and condemned to death and hanged. In one year 6409 of the Regulators had taken the oath of allegiance to the crown. This had the effect some four years later of promoting tory sentiment. Old Jeremiah Field was fond of saying in his old age, that he had fought twice, once for his country, and once for his king, and had been defeated both times. In 1776, something like three thousand Regulators signed up for the British army.

This rebellion in North Carolina, had an immediate effect on the Watauga settlement. Within a year after the battle of the Alamance, thousands of pioneers moved away from the country where the revolt had taken place, and some of the boldest crossed the mountains and took up with the Augusta County people. Many of them headed for Kentucky.

The disorder in the Watauga Country got worse. Virginia paid no attention to them. Sevier and Robertson took thought. They got Anthony Bledsoe to take his compass and go to the place where Col. William Byrd and the other commissioners had left off with their survey and run the line west on the 36 1-2 degree and this showed that the thirteen communities were south of the Virginia line.

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and as the law of man did not run south of thirty-six thirty, they decided to make some that would.

So the settlers met and organized the first free and independent government set up in the western hemisphere by the white race and maintained it for six years with great effectiveness.

The war in North Carolina had resulted in bringing in a most unusual number of free spirits in the shape of outlaws and other undesirable citizens, but at the same time, it had brought many of the finest who were fleeing from the disaffected area.

In the spring of 1772, the thirteen districts held a convention or mass meeting at James Robertson's house. Each of the districts elected a representative to a legislature or meeting of wise men. This legislature adopted a constitution and passed laws for the government of the commonwealth of Watauga, and elected five of their number as a court, to carry out the laws. It must be that the voluminous records of the six years of the rule of commonwealth of Watauga must have been carefully concealed, hidden or destroyed. It is certain however that the court and legislature acted with prudence and wisdom. They had a sheriff and a clerk of the courts, and could try and condemn a man and hang him in three days. One day for the arrest, one day for trial, and one day for execution.

The commonwealth came to an end by the formation of the county of Washington to cover that part of North Carolina west of the mountains, and the officers of the Watauga association became the officers of the new county. Later they formed the State of Franklin, which was suppressed after a while, and John Sevier was indicted for treason. About that time he was elected to the North Carolina Senate and he was not tried.

Robertson became the Grand Old Man of Tennessee. John Sevier became a general; was Governor of the State of Franklin; six times governor of the State of Tennessee; four terms in Congress; fought thirty-five battles including the battle of Kings Mountain, and won thirty-five times.

Born, September 23, 1745, at Tenth Legion, died September 24, 1815, at Fort Decatur, Georgia, while on a mission to the Creek nation, aged seventy years.

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—resist them by building a strong, robust body—take

**TONA SPAF**  
the marvelous reconstructive tonic. It gives new life to the weak and run-down—helps build strong, disease resisting vitality — recommended by physicians. For sale by druggists.

**Administrator's Notice**  
All persons having claims against the estate of James S. Burner, deceased, are hereby given notice to present the same properly proven to the undersigned administrator at his office in Durbin, W. Va. All persons knowing themselves indebted to the said estate will please prepare to settle at once.  
Given under my hand this 7th day of February, 1929.  
H. H. HUDSON,  
Administrator of the estate of James S. Burner, deceased.

**Fiduciary Notice**  
The accounts of L. S. Cochran, guardian of Lovie Anna Bare, Elsie Bare, Mary Ruth Bare, and Archie Bare, are before the undersigned commissioner for settlement.  
Given under my hand this 7th day of February, 1929.  
T. S. McNeel,  
Commissioner of Accounts.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE**  
All persons who have claims against the estate of the late Joseph Pennell are notified to present the same properly proven to the undersigned administrator at his office in Marlinton, W. Va. All persons knowing themselves indebted to said estate will please settle at once.  
N. C. McNeel, Admr.  
Jan. 26, 1929.

**TO THE PUBLIC**  
We have just installed a new equipment for oiling and adjusting all makes of cars.

This Hydraulic Lift raises your car up to a height of 6 feet. We use an air compressed Grease Gun. Bring in your car and be convinced that we can give you a better job for the same price.

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**LOST**  
One black and tan hound, large ears, wrinkles in face, loose hide under neck, small portion of white on breast. Last heard of near Burr Valley running fox. Anyone knowing his whereabouts please notify F. H. Hendricks, Borer, W. Va. and receive reward.

**For Rent**  
A few vacant houses, good gardens, fruit, rent reasonable, close to county road and railroad. Will also sell reasonable, good terms.  
W. R. Moore Supply Co.

**5 percent Farm Loans**  
The Federal Land Bank OF BALTIMORE  
has lowered its interest rate on new loans to 5 percent. The lowest rate ever offered farmers of this community. A long time, easy payment, profit sharing, cooperative system.  
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**Commissioner's Sale of Real Estate**  
Pursuant to authority vested in me by a decree of the Circuit Court of Pocahontas County, West Virginia, entered at the October Term, 1927, in the chancery cause therein pending of A. D. Neill, Administrator of the estate of Tony Esposito, vs Tony Scattone and others, the undersigned special commissioner on  
Monday, March 11, 1929, commencing at 1 o'clock p. m. at the front door of the court house of said county, in the town of Marlinton, will proceed to sell at public auction to the highest bidder, in the following parcels of real estate situated in the Green Bank District, in said county, as follows, to-wit:

1. A tract of land containing 83 poles more or less on the west side of the Green River at Cass, known as the Clayton lot, being the land conveyed by James Persi to Rosalie Clavrochi by deed of record in said county in deed book 51 page 88. This land has on it a store building and some other houses.

2. A tract of land known as lot-3 in block 1 of the proper plat of the town of Deer Creek, being the land conveyed to the said Rosalie Clavrochi Scattone by Uriah Bird, Commissioner of School Lands, by deed of record in said county in deed book number 101. This land has on it a dwelling house.

Terms of Sale—One third cash in hand on day of sale, and the residue, upon a credit of six and twelve months in equal installments, with interest, the purchaser giving notes with good personal security, the title to be retained as ultimate security.

**ANDREW PRICE,** Special Commissioner  
I, D. C. Adkison, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pocahontas county, do certify that the above named Special Commissioner has executed bond as required by said decree.  
D. C. Adkison Clerk

**Administrator's Notice**  
All persons having claims against the estate of the late Mrs. Fannie E. Greathouse are hereby given notice to present the same properly proven to the undersigned administrator at his office in Durbin, W. Va. All persons knowing themselves indebted to said estate will prepare to settle at once.  
This 31st day of January, 1929  
E. L. Fenton,  
Administrator, estate of Mrs. Fannie E. Greathouse, deceased.

**Raw Furs**  
I will pay the highest market price for raw fur and beef hides. Honest grading given. See me before you sell.  
E. P. Hendricks,  
Spice, W. Va.

**Dental Notice**  
Dr. H. B. Slaven has opened a dental office in Marlinton. Office located on Main Street at railroad crossing next to depot. Office hours: Day: 8:00-12:00—1:00-5:00 Open night: 6:30-8:00.

**NOTICE**  
There is a bay mare at my place near Jacob, bay with a white spot on her forehead. The owner can have her by paying for the ad and keeping D. P. Sullivan, Jacob, W. Va.

**For Rent**  
A few vacant houses, good gardens, fruit, rent reasonable, close to county road and railroad. Will also sell reasonable, good terms.  
W. R. Moore Supply Co.

**Notice**  
The partnership heretofore existing between C. A. Sharp and M. P. Moore under the firm name of Moore & Sharp was dissolved by mutual consent as of December 31, 1928.  
Moore & Sharp

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Examined. Glasses fitted and furnished.

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**Order of Publication**  
State of West Virginia  
At rules, held in the Clerk's office of the Circuit Court of Pocahontas county on Monday, the 4th day of February, 1929.

J. R. Cutlip, Plaintiff  
vs. In Chancery  
R. E. Clifton, Beale Cutlip, Mary J. McClure, Luther Cutlip, Mintie McCoy, D. W. Cutlip, Lizzie Morrison, Nettie Kennison, Mintie Deah, Stella Brock, Susie Morrison, Forest Morrison, Summers Morrison, Edgar Morrison and Earnest Morrison, the last nine named of whom are heirs-at-law of Lizzie Morrison, deceased, Homer Cutlip, Fred Cutlip, Wymon Cutlip, and Cameron Cutlip, the last four named of whom are the heirs-at-law of William Cutlip, deceased, and the heirs-at-law of Nettie Kennison, deceased. Defendants

The object of the above entitled suit is to require specific performance of a contract entered into between the plaintiff and J. M. Cutlip now deceased in the year 1904 and to have the court in this suit make to the plaintiff a deed for a tract of 145 acres of real estate of which Jonathan F. Cutlip died seized and which was purchased by the plaintiff at a public sale made in said year by J. M. Cutlip as his administrator and for general benefit. This day came the plaintiff by his attorney and is appearing by affidavit filed in this cause that Lizzie Morrison, Minnie Deah, Susie Morrison, Forest Morrison, Summers Morrison, Edgar Morrison and Earnest Morrison are nonresidents of the State of West Virginia, it is ordered that they do appear here within one month after the date of the first publication thereof and do what is necessary to protect their interests in this suit.

A copy taken: D. C. Adkison, Clerk  
A. P. Edgar, Counsel.

**For Sale**  
1 1/2-20 M.C. Overland Deering "International" Tractor.  
1 871 Tractor used harness.  
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1 McCormick binder. All in good condition.  
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